

Waterspreading

PRACTICE INTRODUCTION

USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service - practice code 640



DEFINITION

Waterspreading is diverting or collecting runoff from natural channels, gullies, or streams with a system of dams, dikes, ditches, or other means, and spreading it over relatively flat areas.

PRACTICE INFORMATION

Waterspreading systems are suited to locations where the topography and climate are such that additional moisture can be expected to improve plant growth. Areas that receive 8 to 25 inches of precipitation are generally well suited for waterspreading if other site conditions are adequate.

The purpose of the practice is to supplement natural precipitation in areas where extra moisture is needed. Waterspreading systems apply to areas where:

- Soils have suitable permeability rates and waterholding capacity for the crops or forage to be grown on the site.
- The topography and soil are suitable for diversion, collection, and spreading of runoff water.
- Rainfall probabilities indicate runoff or streamflow is available during most years at the appropriate time and volume to significantly increase plant production.
- The system can be designed to operate without excessive erosion.
- Adverse affects on fish and wildlife will be minimal.

Additional information including design criteria and specifications are in the local NRCS Field Office Technical Guide.